



DENTAL CARE FOR DOGS AND CATS

Most dogs and cats will need a dental cleaning at some point in their lives, and many need to have dental care yearly. Dental disease is one of the most common issues veterinarians see with dogs and cats over the age of three, and left undiagnosed, can lead to extreme pain, bone loss, other health issues - all leading to a reduction in quality of life.

But like many diseases, it is possible to prevent severe dental issues by establishing an oral health routine early and often by introducing good dental habits. Training your pet to allow brushing of its teeth is paramount to avoiding costly dental care, pain, and tooth loss.

BRUSHING OF TEETH



1. Use a soft toothbrush, sized for your pet with an enzymatic flavored toothpaste. Some pets will even tolerate an electric toothbrush.
2. Get your pet used to the toothbrush initially by just showing it to the pet, place a nice treat like peanut butter, tuna juice on the brush and allow them to chew it, then eventually start brushing. Many love the chicken flavored pastes.
3. GO SLOW!! Baby steps are the key. Brush one tooth and give treats etc.. Don't get frustrated or make the session a fight.

DENTAL DIETS

Hills Science Diet T/D diet makes kibble that helps scrape the surface of the teeth. It has been engineered to do this unlike most dry foods.

WATER ADDITIVES

Water additives that make the tooth surface slippery help avoid build up of bacteria and plaque/tartar. Oxyfresh Dental hygiene solution and Healthy Mouth are two such products that seem to work well. I favor Oxyfresh. As a side note, those with sodium laureth sulfate can cause stomach upset.

DENTAL RINSES & GELS

CET Oral Rinse, Dentahex Rinse, Nolvadent, Oradent, Maxiguard gel/spray. These all help to kill the bacteria that causes plaque. They are excellent help in problem areas, situation when you cannot brush, animals that will not tolerate brushing may tolerate rinses. Cats often do well with these, especially the Maxiguard Gel.



ROUTINE DENTAL CLEANINGS

Just like humans, dogs and cats will usually at some point need a full dentistry. Depending on genetics, breed, behaviors – such as eating stool, hard items that break teeth (avoid giving your pet anything you wouldn't chew on), the teeth are affected also by general health issues, for example diabetes, kidney disease, infections, autoimmune disease. Typically try to budget for a dental for your pet once yearly.

Finally, a word about [NADS or Non-anesthesia Dentals](#). In the past few years, this has become a cheaper option offered by groomers, pet stores, and others, as a safe alternative to cleanings under anesthesia. While the teeth may be whiter, the procedures are not the same. Only a licensed veterinarian can identify underlying issues while ensuring a thorough cleaning is also done underneath the gumline and between the teeth where the bacteria that causes periodontal disease occurs.